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p. Janson, Donald
Appleton, Warren B
Orig. John Birch Society
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Communist 'Rules' For Revolt Viewed As Durable Fraud

By DONALD JANSON

Among a spate of broadsides, leaflets and ultraconservative books distributed at the New England Rally for God, Family and Country, held in Boston, was a stack of flyers labeled Communist "rules for revolution."

The "rules" call for corrupting the young by stressing sex to the exclusion of moral virtues, fomenting disorder and dissatisfaction with government, legislating gun control and seizing power.

"Friend, do you recognize any of these things going on in our world?" the Committee for American Broadcasting asks after listing the "rules." The committee is a project of Warren B. Appleton, a John Birch Society leader in Brockton, Mass.

The same list has been reproduced in right-wing publications, small-town newspaper advertisements and gun lobby magazines for a quarter of a century. Group Research, a Washington organization, reports a spurt in recent months.

The "rules" appear to be one of the more durable frauds popular among far right and anti-Communist organizations, similar in purpose to misquotations of Lenin, Stalin and Khrushchev by ultraconservatives and of Hitler by the radical left.

The Port Washington (L.I.) News carried a full-page ad last month reprinting the "rules" and asking: "How many of these rules are being carried out in this nation today? Or is it just a coincidence?"

Frequently the ads are printed without imprimatur. The ad in the Port Washington paper says only that it was "placed by a group of loyal Americans."

Each reproduction of the "rules" says they were captured from Communists by allied officers in May, 1919, in Dusseldorf, Germany.

Never are names or addresses given. The National Archives, the Library of Congress and the libraries of the nation's universities have no copy or trace of the "document."

'Completely Spurious'

Senator Lee Metcalf, Democrat of Montana, said in an interview that exhaustive research had proved the "rules for revolution" to be "completely spurious."

"The extreme right wing in America also follows rules," he said earlier in placing his findings in The Congressional Record, "and one of these rules is to make maximum use of false, misleading and fear-inspiring quotations."

He checked with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Library of Congress and the Internal Security Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary and none could authenticate the "rules."

Senator James O. Eastland, Democrat, of Mississippi, the subcommittee chairman, said F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover testified that no source could be found for the "document" and "therefore we can logically speculate that the document is spurious."

Nevertheless, Congressmen continue to receive copies of the "rules" from alarmed constituents and continue to insert them in The Congressional Record as if they had become aware of them for the first time.

Source in Doubt

Frequently, American Legion posts, local Birch Society affiliates and others, in reproducing the "rules," simply credit the last publication where they saw it as their source.

The "loyal Americans" who advertised in the Port Washington News, for example, called it a reprint from the Waterville (N.Y.) Advance. There is no Waterville (N.Y.) Advance. They apparently meant the Waterville (Minn.) Advance, which printed the "rules" in 1968 with the comment that it did not "see how any thinking person can truthfully say that the Communists do not have any part in the chaos that is upsetting our nation."

The earliest publication of the "rules" turned up in a search was in The New World News of February, 1946. Many who reproduce the "rules" quote the defunct biweekly newsletter of Moral Re-Armament Inc., as their source.

Morris Kominsky, in a book called "The Hoaxers," to be published soon by Branden Press of Boston, quotes H. Mead Twitchell Jr., until recently an employee of the now closed Los Angeles office of Moral Re-Armament, as saying that the "rules" appeared in

during the twenties and thirties, was translated into English in Britain [and] I believe it was first used in the United States in Rising Tide, a magazine published about 1937, but I cannot find a copy to check this and do not know the name of the German newspaper."

The only magazine called Rising Tide that circulated in the United States, according to a check by librarians, was a periodical for boys and girls of the Presbyterian Church of England, published from 1880 to 1937.

John H. George, political science teacher at Central State College in Edmund, Okla., who has made a study of misquotations by extremists, called the "rules" a forgery.

Merle Fainsod of Harvard, specialist in political science and government of Eastern Europe, said he had never encountered such a document.

Role of Prosecutor

Reproduction of the "rules" accelerated after they were endorsed in 1954 as authentic by George A. Brautigam, Florida State Attorney for Dade County (Miami).

Since then, numerous ultraconservative publications have reproduced the "rules" with the Brautigam statement and his signature appended. The Rev. Billy James Hargis devoted the cover of Christian Crusade to this combination a decade later.

The Brautigam statement said "the above rules for revolution were secured by the state attorney's office from a known member of the Communist party, who acknowledged it to be still a part of the Communist program for overthrowing our government."

Mr. Brautigam died in 1957. His successor, Richard E. Gerstein, said in a telephone interview that people have been asking him ever since, more frequently in the last year or two, what basis Mr. Brautigam had for the statement.

Mr. Gerstein said he had been able to find none. He noted that his predecessor made the statement during the course of a Brautigam investigation of several persons indicated on charges of contempt for invoking the Fifth Amendment and remaining silent when questioned.

Miami newspapers later branded the investigation a "witch-hunt," Mr. Gerstein said. None of those indicated ever went to jail.

A Colorful Introduction

A copy of the "rules for revolution" entered in The Congressional Record by Senator Metcalf has a colorful introduction, perhaps intended to lend verisimilitude:

"On a dark night in May, 1919, two lorries rumbled across a bridge and on into the town of Dusseldorf."

"Among the dozen rowdy, singing Tommies apparently headed for a gay evening were two representatives of the allied military intelligence."

"These men had traced a wave of indiscipline, mutiny, and murder among the troops to the local headquarters of a revolutionary organization established in the town."

"Pretending to be drunk, they brushed by the sentries and arrested the ringleaders—a group of 13 men and women seated at a long table."

"In the course of the raid the Allied officers emptied the contents of the safe."

"One of the documents found in it contained a specific outline of 'rules for bringing about a revolution.'"

"It is reprinted here to show the strategy of materialistic revolution, and how personal attitudes and habits of living affect the affairs of nations."

The "rules" follow, once again with credit to The New World News.

The Metcalf selection was from Western Voice Publishers of Englewood, Colo., which also has a long list of anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic and racist publications.

Those who have listed the "rules" in The Congressional Record this year include Representatives John J. Duncan of Tennessee, Joe Skubitz of Kansas and Louis C. Wyman of New Hampshire.

'To Protect Our Country'

Mr. Duncan commented, in doing so, that "I became alarmed as I reviewed these and realized how effective they are right now in this great country of ours."

"We see the results taking place in our society," he said, "and it is our duty to warn our constituency and to protect our country."

Police stations in the Boston area have tacked up on bulletin boards flyers bearing the "rules." The "document" has been widely distributed by the Network of Patriotic Letter Writers, Pasadena, Calif., and the Association to Preserve Our Right to Keep and Bear Arms, Medford, Ore.

Last year American Opinion, the Birch Society magazine, linked the country's sexual revolution to the "rules." This summer Arthur C. Pruden of Florida, Miss., like hundreds of others, typed them out and sent them to his Congressman, noting that he considered them "food for thought."